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PRIVACY IS IN SHORT SUPPLY THESE DAYS. IN DAY 1 OF OUR THREE-PART SERIES, METRO TALKS TO HACKERS WHO WANT TO HELP PRESERVE WHAT'S LEFT OF YOURS PAGES 8-9

You can have a drink when you're bigger, little grocer

Pilot requires applicants to have 2,000 square feet set aside for LCBO kiosk PAGE 3

Your phone is perfectly safe — so far as we know, anyway

Panel seeks further research into possible link between radio waves, cancer PAGE 13

Food trucks to roam free (except for here, here ...)

Metro maps where they can go while obeying proposed 50m-from-resto rule PAGE 6

Island airport expansion plan survives vote

Negotiations, not jets, get approval. Both sides of debate claim victory after 44-0 council vote

City council voted unanimously Tuesday to negotiate with the Toronto Port Authority over expansion of the Billy Bishop airport.

The 44-0 vote came after a daylong debate sparked by Porter Airlines' request to fly Bombardier CS 100 jets from a longer runway on the Toronto Island.

Council made it clear that approving negotiations does not mean it supports introducing jets. That decision won't happen before next year, assuming a long list of preconditions is met, from filing a new airport master plan to studying the effects on birds.

Both Porter Airlines president Bob Deluce and No Jets TO chair Anshul Kapoor claimed victory.

"It's a definite victory for a grassroots movement in Toronto, to make sure that multimillion-dollar lobbying campaigns do not define our city," Kapoor said.

Deluce called the vote an "overwhelming vote of support for everything we've been looking for. There's now a clear path forward in terms of a framework for discussion."

The council debate was dominated by fears of congestion caused by cabs, shuttles and private cars trying to drop people off at the airport ferry. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Requirements

The city wants many things before considering the proposal, including:

- Design and construction details of runway and taxiway extensions.
- A completed environmental assessment.
- Confirmation that the harbour safety zone, where boats are excluded, does not need to be expanded.

LEAFS NOT DEAD YET

Centre Tyler Bozak and goaltender Jonathan Bernier celebrate after defeating the Calgary Flames at the ACC on Tuesday by a score of 3-2, picking up their first two points since beating Los Angeles on March 13 and bolstering their slim hopes of making the playoffs. Story, page 26. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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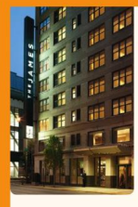

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Provincial politics

New papers raise possibility of June election

Don't make plans for June.

If, as internal documents suggest, Finance Minister Charles Sousa is planning to table a May 1 budget, the minority Liberals could be plunged into a June 26 election.

Kathleen Wynne
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

That's because the budget must be debated for at least eight hours over 12 sessional days. The legislature does not sit Fridays so 12 sessional days is the equivalent of three work weeks.

But because of the Victoria Day break, MPPs do not sit for the third week in May. So the budget may not go to a vote in the house until May 29, setting the stage for a June 26 provincial election.

Confidential documents reveal Sousa is set to table a budget that cuts hydro rates, possibly boosts in-vitro fertilization funding, and earmarks $2.5 billion to attract business to Ontario.

Insiders leaked to the Progressive Conservatives an 11-page "communication rollout" that shows at least $5.7 billion in new spending in the fiscal blueprint.

Premier Kathleen Wynne put on a brave face despite being forced back to the drawing board on promoting a budget designed to be a re-election platform.

"It's unfortunate that those confidential plans may have been released, but the substance is exactly what I have said we are going to do," she said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Big grocers welcome LCBO kiosk pilot

Liquor sales. Major chains are eligible to sell alcohol at their stores, but smaller retailers complain of being excluded

Deadline

Grocery stores have to apply to the province by May 9 to install the store-within-a-store that would sell a wide variety of beer, spirits and wine, including craft beers and VQA wines.

Big grocery chains are cheering Ontario's move to sell beer and liquor at LCBO Express kiosks in their stores, but convenience-store owners and smaller independent grocers feel cut off by the government's plans.

At the LCBO's Summerhill location in Toronto Tuesday, Finance Minister Charles Sousa unveiled a long-awaited pilot project that would see 10 LCBO-run kiosks open in select grocery stores by the end of the year.

"We welcome this — and any — opportunity that allows our customers more choice when shopping at our stores," said Sobeys' Ontario spokesperson Sarah Stover.

Competitor chain Metro, which already sells beer and wine at its Quebec supermarkets, also gave a thumbs-up to the concept.

"We are always looking to improve the customer experience in our stores and the LCBO's announcement is certainly something that is of interest and that we will examine further," said spokesperson Marie-Claude Bacon.

Longo's spokesperson Rosanne Longo added: "This is something we'd be interested in. Our customers want convenience and it's a good complement to our food selection."

Ontario requires applicants to have 2,000 square feet set aside for the LCBO Express outlet, which essentially shuts out smaller independent grocers and convenience stores.

"It's disappointing that they're only putting it in the big grocery chains," said Chris Wilcox, general manager of Quickie Convenience Stores, which has 39 locations in Ontario and 11 in Quebec.

He noted the size of the average convenience store is 2,000 square feet, so they're excluded from the pilot project.

The LCBO has not said how long the pilot project will run. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

British invasion at AGO

Mary Moore, daughter of Henry Moore, poses with her father's work at the Henry Moore and Francis Bacon exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario on Tuesday. The AGO will feature the work of two giants of 20th-century British art together in a major exhibition of sculpture and paintings. Painter Bacon (1909-1992) and sculptor Moore (1898-1986) were contemporaries who shared an obsession with expressing themes of suffering, struggle and survival in relation to the human body. Both artists survived the Second World War.

VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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What's the buzz in T.O.? Pot pizza

Double-baked, indeed. Vancouver marijuana pizza-maker looking to expand here

Mark Klokeid has heard the jokes about his Vancouver pizzeria and politely acknowledges the humour in them.

There's the one about how he's joint owner of what's billed as Canada's first pizzeria with marijuana as one of its ingredients. Or how the pizzas are double baked.

With plans to expand to Toronto over the next few months, Klokeid talks of how he's providing a needed medical service to people with legal prescriptions.

"We have federal patients here in Canada like myself," he said. "Where are we supposed to medicate?"

Klokeid has Type 1 diabetes and has undergone bone marrow transplants.

Since he set up shop a week before Christmas, he said he has been checked out by a variety of authorities, including police, and tobacco, health and environmental regulators.

"We're not trying to get shut down," he said. "We've been very open about what we do."

He prides himself on making a healthy product, with whole wheat, hemp heart pizza. (Hemp heart is made from shelled hemp seeds.) The marijuana is either sprinkled on top, like a garnish, with a slightly fibery feel, or infused in oil.

In order to have a pot pizza at Mega iLL, you need to prove you are over 18 and produce a medical prescription. Approved customers bring in their own medically prescribed marijuana and hand it over to the cooks. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

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Olympian says it's time to run

Kaillie Humphries, the reigning Olympic champion in the two-woman bobsleigh, was in Toronto on Tuesday, sharing workout techniques and giving running advice, to help ramp up the city for spring training season after a long and brutal winter that sidelined many runners. CONTRIBUTED

Isabella St. Free coach house — if you'll move it

It's definitely not an April Fools' joke. And it may turn out to be more wishful thinking than a real option.

But Casey House, the HIV/AIDS treatment facility, is offering up its 1889 coach house on Isabella Street for free. You just have to move the 3,000-square-foot historic brick home from its longtime location just south of Bloor off Jarvis Street.

The 48-by-56-foot coach house has been home since the late 1990s to a labyrinth of crammed offices and meeting rooms for community nursing staff, finance employees and Casey House Foundation fundraising staff.

Beloved Casey House co-founder June Callwood used to hang out there.

The property, located just across the street from the main care facility on Huntley Street, was to have been integrated into a massive redevelopment of Casey House, set to open in late 2016.

Scott Weir of heritage specialists ERA Architects Inc. has overseen numerous moves of historic properties in Toronto. It can be prohibitively expensive, he said, and usually just done by deep-pocketed developers as a condition of getting approval for big projects.

"The moving of the building wouldn't be as hard as finding a place to put it," said Weir. "The trick is really trying to navigate this thing through the city.

"It has to be some place within a reasonable distance that doesn't involve bridges in between."

But interested buyers beware: You're looking at more than just a pricey move and a potentially "quick close."

The coach house must have a new home by Labour Day weekend. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Casey House on Isabella Street with the coach house on the left.
DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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tico.ca

This map displays what would be off limits to food trucks in the downtown core. Each point represents a 50-metre buffer around an existing restaurant. MICHAEL COREY OF THE CENTER FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Mapping where food trucks may roam

Foodies. City staff recommendations wouldn't leave much space for vendors

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
jessica.smithcross@metronews.ca

Toronto's 10,000 restaurants, most of them packed together in the city's core, won't leave a lot of room for food trucks if city council approves a set of recommendations this week.

City staff is recommending food truck vendors be allowed to operate on Toronto streets in "pay and display" parking areas for up to five hours, as long as they're 50 metres from an existing restaurant.

There are some exceptions. Under the recommendations, food trucks can still operate in private parking lots that are within the 50-metre zone.

If approved, the new rules would be in effect this spring. Today, food trucks in Toronto can operate for a maximum of 10 minutes in a parking lot.

The recommendations going before council define restaurants as "a licensed eating establishment that is open and operating," which are described by the city as "every place where food items intended for human consumption are made for sale, offered for sale, stored or sold."

The above map of existing restaurants was created based on addresses with recent DineSafe inspections. Keep in mind, restaurants close and open frequently.

WITH FILES FROM TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Measles outbreaks

Get vaccinated, Ontario health officials urge

Ontario health officials say there are a number of small measles outbreaks in the province and are calling on residents to get vaccinated.

Public Health Ontario says there have been 11 confirmed cases of measles in the province this year and they are being managed by local public health units.

Public health officials say measles is highly infectious and people can spread the disease before they are symptomatic.

They say people should ensure they are up-to-date with their measles vaccine, especially if they are travelling to places where the virus is circulating.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Anti-Muslim flyers. Man gets nine months for promoting hatred

A notorious protester convicted of wilfully promoting hatred against Muslims and criminally harassing a Muslim man and his family was sentenced Tuesday to nine months in jail.

Eric Brazau handed out a flyer that "vilified Muslims and disparages their religion," Ontario Court Justice S. Ford Clements said in February, when he found Brazau guilty.

The case was far from being on the borderline between "rough and tumble debate" and hate speech, as Brazau had argued, Clements said in a College Park courtroom.

Brazau handed out the flyer, which contained many offensive references to Islam and Muslims, in August and September 2012. While distributing it, Brazau sometimes yelled obscenities about Islam "in a tone of voice that suggested he was very angry and had little interest in debate," Clements said.

Brazau argued that he did not intend to promote hate speech, but rather to stimulate debate about censorship and Sharia law. Clements refuted the claim.

"Mr. Brazau is far too intelligent to believe this to be so," said Clements.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"He knew the material would deeply wound and anger Muslims."
Ontario Court Justice S. Ford Clements on Eric Brazau's conviction of promoting hatred against Muslims

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See that symbol? It means you can scan this image with your Metro News app to see why hacking on the big and small screen looks fun, but is not very accurate.

Best security software? Keep private life offline

Even the best programs will only do 20 per cent of the job, says ethical hacker Mike Sues. Your best defence against nefarious types on the web is keeping it low-pro in cyberspace

LUCY SCHOLEY
Metro in Ottawa

Give Mike Sues enough time and he could hack your computer to steal financial information, find out where you live and identify your family members on social media.

Luckily, Sues doesn't specialize in illegal hacking. He's an "ethical hacker," meaning companies and government agencies hire him to crack into their computer software security systems, expose their weaknesses, and fix them.

You might think Sues — the CEO and ethical hack specialist of Rigel Kent Security & Advisory Services Inc. — has an impenetrable security system on his home computer. But that's not the case. He says staving off hackers starts with keeping our private lives offline.

"That's the first thing we should be worried about because that information can be used by the attacker against you," he says.

Sues says the average home user has a "weak" password — usually the name of a spouse or child — that a hacker can easily guess by trolling photos of family members that are posted on social media sites.

These days, hacking is not necessarily the work of a lone dude in his parents' basement. Often, it's the method of organized crime groups using "botnet" malware to anonymously attack large swaths of computers. A small sum of money taken from one person's bank account can add up when it's thousands of people whose credit card numbers have been compromised.

Financial information can be gleaned from password guessing, but also from email phishing (see next page for an explanation of terms). While Sues said it might seem like a "no-brainer" to avoid clicking on suspicious links that land in your inbox, many people still fall for it.

What's more, if you publicly broadcast photos of your band practice or running club on social media, don't be surprised if you get an email with links to music events or deals on new jogging gear. That's a form of "social engineering," hacking called spear phishing — a custom-made and very specific phishing attack. One click of those links could let a hacker into any information saved on your hard drive, including passwords, contact lists, tax forms and other financial information.

"The compromise would take just a number of seconds — or even under a second," says Sues.

If you have a tablet or an iPhone and you synch it with your home computer, then photos, music and videos could also be stolen in the attack.

Sues says anti-virus software programs can help, but they are only about 20 per cent effective. And no security system will protect you 100 per cent.

"If an attacker really wants to get in and they have lots of time to do it, they'll get in."

Hacking your world: Day 1 of 3

- Who's hacking who? Who's hacking you? Metro looks at the real-life world of virtual break-ins
- Tomorrow: When the government spies on you

Modern life's Catch-22

"We tend to live in a society where we're concerned about our privacy, but we so easily give it up by posting pictures in our status updates."

Computer security specialist Mike Sues

In this film image, Rooney Mara is shown portraying hacker/private investigator and fugitive Lisbeth Salander in a scene from The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo. Much like Mara's character, hackers in real life are often misunderstood because of their technical skills, which can be used for good or ill. But don't think it's all like you see in the movies. Capturing a more realistic portrayal of hacking would probably make for lousy entertainment. Sometimes it's ridiculously easy, other times, not. While sometimes a hacker can crack a password after a few seconds of typing, that's often not the case. CONTRIBUTED

Stay safe out there

Tips to prevent hackers from stealing your information

- Have a decent email spam filter and don't click on links or attachments from people you don't trust.
- Avoid using weak passwords, including the names of family members. Many websites will force you to pick a stronger password that includes a mix of upper and lower case letters and numbers, but not always.
- Change your Facebook settings so that only friends can view your photos.
- Regularly check your banking and credit card statements. Small items that you can't remember buying may mean your accounts have been hacked.
- Do not save any passwords and financial information on your hard drive.

Origin story

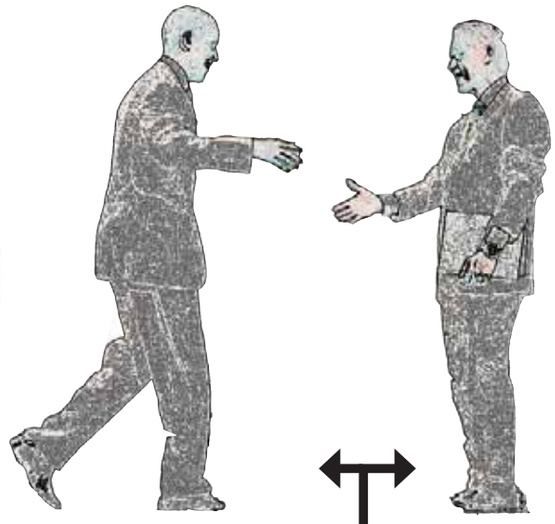
The term "hacker" is often used to describe someone who breaks into a computer system and steals information illegally or for malicious purposes.

- But that's not the true meaning of the term. "Hacker" originated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Tech Model Railroad Club in the 1960s.
- It was initially used to describe someone who strives to fully understand the inner workings of a system — be it computer or otherwise.

Phishing

"Hello, I represent the exiled Prince Ali of Utopia. I am authorized to release the sum of $1M to anyone who can help him transfer his frozen assets ..."

- Phishing attacks usually involve emails or pop-ups that try to trick people into downloading viruses or giving up personal information. They may also direct people to URLs for websites infected with viruses.
- Spear Phishing is a more targeted form involving using personal info about the target to make the trick seem more trustworthy.



Man in the middle

Apple alerted users in February to a vulnerability in its software that allowed hackers to get in between Wi-Fi routers and users and monitor and intercept Wi-Fi signals.

- **While Apple issued a patch for iPhones and iPads, there's no word yet on a fix for their computers.**
- **One safeguard users can employ is to use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) when using Wi-Fi**

Social hacking

A hacker made off with $100,000 worth of bitcoins in Ottawa recently just by telling a help desk he was the Bitcoin firm's CEO and he needed them to reboot a server.

- Social norms can be a powerful tool for hackers. Most people know they should ask for ID, but they don't.
- Some might call it a con, but often social hacking has a tech component. For instance, a hacker might "return" a "lost and found" USB key with a virus, hoping it gets plugged in.

Don't make your password 'password'

Much like a home security system, a strong password can deter a hacker. But many people pick ones that are easy to break.

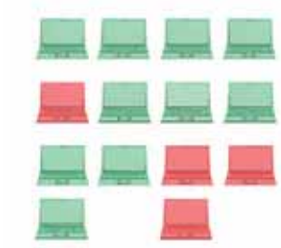
- Computer security researcher Mark Burnett says 9.8 per cent of people use either "password," "123456," or "12345678."
- 98 per cent of people use the top 10,000 passwords — the words hackers' computer programs will typically try first.

Government surveillance

In January, the CBC reported CSEC had been monitoring airport Wi-Fi, spying on Canadians.

- Several countries have accused each other of sponsoring hackers and even creating viruses and botnets.
- The NSA disclosed that it collects about 250 million Internet communications each year. Google says that from 2009-2013, government requests for information about its users rose 120 per cent to total 27,477 requests.

Zero-day attacks



As computer security flaws are found and patched, some users will stay up-to-date and others will not.

- A zero-day attack hits newly discovered flaws. They don't work after the flaw is patched ... except on computers that haven't been updated.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS: SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO AND GETTY IMAGES

On hacking: 'It can be really, really boring'

What makes a hacker hack? Science.

"The little kid who is 12 in a basement breaking into computers wasn't really me," says Leigh Honeywell, 29, a Canadian computer security professional, who works at a major cloud provider in San Francisco.

Some say the dominant hacking motive is greed and voyeurism, but Honeywell says curiosity motivates her and other ethical hackers.

"When you are doing hacking right, you are doing science, and whatever your educational background is, there's that element of curiosity and playfulness," she says.

She fell into it while studying biophysics when she went with a friend to a hacker conference.

"It was the coolest thing ever," she says.

The idea that hooked her was that all software is broken and people in the field are trying to make it "less broken." It's impossible to get perfect, but Honeywell says there's a responsibility to make it better because people rely on it.

It's fascinating work, there's good money and high demand, but it's hard to get into, she says.

It's not all serious. She runs a "capture the flag team," that meets up with others at conferences and competes at hacking challenges to break into tournament computers and expose flaws.

But it's not always fun either. "One of the things people don't realize about hacking is it can be really, really boring," she says. It can often involve writing code and waiting hours while the computer runs through the program.

More people should learn about hacking, she says.

"I've never heard a good argument for not teaching college kids about hacking," she adds. "These are the kids that are going to go on to build software. If they don't know what they are up against, that's how you get insecure software."

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO IN OTTAWA

Ethical hacker Leigh Honeywell
VINCE TALOTTA /TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NATO to reinforce eastern defences, cuts Russia links

Foreign ministers meeting. Unanimous agreement to end all practical civilian and military co-operation with Moscow

NATO foreign ministers moved Tuesday to beef up the defences of front-line alliance members feeling menaced by a more assertive Russia, with Secretary of State John Kerry proclaiming the U.S. commitment to their security is "unwavering."

The ministers from NATO's 28 member nations also ordered suspension of all "practical civilian and military co-operation" with Vladimir Putin's Russia, though they made sure a line of communication with the Kremlin remains open at the ambassadorial level.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a keystone of U.S. and European security since the end of the Second World War, is facing its most acute geopolitical crisis in years: the fallout from Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, which the Obama administration and its allies condemn as a brazen, illegal land grab.

On Tuesday, an estimated 35,000 to 40,000 Russian troops equipped with tanks and aircraft remained near the border with Ukraine, a NATO official said.

The military official described the Russian buildup as "a complete combat force" highly threatening to Ukraine.

To reassure NATO's skittish eastern allies, Kerry told a news conference, the U.S. has already sent six F-15 fighters to perform air patrols over the Baltic, deployed a dozen F-16s to Poland and dispatched the USS Truxtun, a guided-missile destroyer, to the Black Sea.

"And more U.S. support is on the way," Kerry said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Deshchytsia speaks with NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen during a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission in Brussels on Tuesday. OLIVIER HOSLET/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian reaction

It's a first step: Baird

NATO's decision to end civilian and military co-operation with Russia on Tuesday is just one step in a long journey to end the Ukraine crisis, says Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird.

"This is exactly what Canada did weeks ago. It's not going to be business as usual so we're suspending all civilian and military co-operation with the Russian Federation," Baird told The Canadian Press from Brussels.

Asked whether NATO has been too slow to respond, Baird said: "It's the first minister's meeting we've had since the crisis came about."

Baird said NATO will consider options to counter Russia's unilateral annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. The minister said capacity building, tactical support and beefing up assets are among them.

"We think a strong response is necessary," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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See that symbol? It means you can scan this image with your Metro News app to see a photo gallery of the N.L. storm — and remind yourself it's April.

'Spring' weather makes April fools out of St. John's residents

There was no spring weather for St. John's, N.L., which came to a stop Tuesday morning as an early-spring snowstorm dropped more than 30 centimetres of snow on the area overnight, with a possibility of another 20 centimetres before it moves out.

PAUL DALY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chile. Huge earthquake hits off coast

A powerful magnitude-8.2 earthquake struck off Chile's northern coast Tuesday night, causing landslides and setting off a small tsunami that forced an evacuation of coastal areas. In Arica, the mayor reported some minor injuries and said some homes made of adobe were destroyed. The quake shook modern buildings in nearby Peru and in Bolivia's high altitude capital of La Paz.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake struck 99 kilometres northwest of the city of Iquique, shaking a region that has been rocked by numerous quakes over the past two weeks.

Some roads in northern Chile were blocked by landslides, causing traffic jams among people leaving the coast.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center issued an alert for all of Latin America's Pacific coast.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Medical pot users fear choice of pain or prison

'It's unconscionable.'
Protesters convene on Parliament Hill to protest being 'forced' to choose between 'basic health' and 'liberty'

Activists hold a rally on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Tuesday to protest the new medical marijuana regulations. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Conservative government is forcing users of medical marijuana to choose between treating their symptoms or holding on to their freedoms, a gathering of pot-smoking protesters complained Tuesday.

Several dozen demonstrators, some of them puffing on joints and vaporizers, gathered on Parliament Hill to protest the government's new medical-marijuana regulations on the very day they went into effect.

Among other things, the new rules require marijuana users to get their supply of the drug from commercial growers and prohibits them from growing their own, or growing it on behalf of other licensed users.

The regulations also impose limits on the amount of cannabis that licensed users can have in their possession.

Lawyer John Conroy won a Federal Court injunction last month that allows users to continue growing their own pot until a wider constitutional challenge of the regulations is heard — a ruling Health Canada says it plans to appeal.

But the courts have already determined that medically approved patients can use marijuana to relieve pain symptoms, said Conroy.

"What Health Canada have done is forced patients to worry about our basic health maintenance versus our liberty," said Debbie Stultz Giffin, a medical-marijuana user diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.

"It's unconscionable."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Legal Matters

Can the law firm afford your case?

Roger Oatley,
Personal Injury Alliance

Q When someone is looking for a personal injury lawyer, why is it important to consider a firm's financial resources?

A Personal injury cases dealing with injuries of a catastrophic nature are very complex and often long-term, and as a result they can be very expensive.

Q How much do these types of trials cost?

A Cases involving catastrophic injuries, such as spinal cord or brain injuries, can cost upwards of $100,000 to $250,000 or more — to pay for records, demonstrative evidence, and various types of experts to assess the client, write reports and give evidence. It's important to know that the firm can cover these costs.

Q How do you determine that?

A Ask the lawyer what kinds of experts might be needed (for example, health-care professionals, financial experts, even engineers) and how much they would cost. A lawyer who doesn't know the depth and scope of experts required won't have any idea of the financial costs. Ask also how much money the firm spends on experts and resources. I can tell you that all three Personal Injury Alliance law firms will have total disbursements for these kinds of files in the millions of dollars. That's a very good gauge of how much work a firm does in this area and their commitment to ensuring the best possible outcome for their clients. Another clue that the firm isn't fully invested in this specialized area of law: if the law firm asks for a retainer to cover these costs. PIA law firms are committed to covering these costs for our clients until the case is resolved.

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Afghans queue up for voting cards

High-stakes election. Amid Taliban threats and attacks, voters turn out to register

Afghans lined up by the hundreds Tuesday in a last-minute rush to register for voting cards, a sign that interest in national elections is high despite fears of violence.

The Taliban have vowed to "use all force" to disrupt the balloting and the militants already have staged several high-profile attacks in the Afghan capital of Kabul in recent weeks. But men and women queuing on the last day of registration said they won't let the threats keep them away from the polls on Saturday as Afghanistan experiences its first democratic transfer of power.

President Hamid Karzai, who has ruled the country since the Taliban were ousted by a U.S.-led invasion in 2001, is constitutionally barred.

Karzai has refused to sign a security pact that would allow thousands of international forces to stay beyond a year-end deadline to train and advise Afghan forces. All three front-runners have said they would sign the deal. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I hope the corruption is ended and security is improved."

Ghulam Abbas, shopkeeper, who was in line for a voter card in Kabul on Tuesday.

Afghan girls hold flags at a rally for presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah in Herat, Afghanistan, on Tuesday. HOSHANG HASHIMI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Marathon bomb victim

Saudi Arabian sues Glenn Beck for defamation

A Saudi Arabian man injured in the Boston Marathon bombings has filed a defamation lawsuit against Glenn Beck, accusing the conservative commentator of calling him "the money man" behind the attack.

Alharbi has been called a "murderer, child killer and terrorist" based on Beck's statements, the suit says. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Identifying victims

Washington mudslides' death toll grows to 27

The official death toll from Washington's mudslide has increased to 27, with the Snohomish County medical examiner's office saying 19 victims have been positively identified. That's up from 24 dead with 18 identified on Monday.

The latest name to the list is 58-year-old Brandy L. Ward of Arlington. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Changes to your GO Transit Schedule

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Turkish election contested

Police use water cannons to break up a protest by hundreds outside Turkey's Supreme Election Council building in Ankara, Tuesday, in support of the country's main opposition party which is challenging local election results in the capital. BURHAN OZBILICI /THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Your cellphone is not killing you, panel says

Inconsistent studies. But panel recommends more research to see if there's a link between radiofrequency waves and cases of cancer

Federal guidelines that spell out safe exposure levels of radiofrequency waves emitted by cellphones and other wireless devices appear to be mostly adequate, but research to clarify the potential risk of cancer should be aggressively pursued, an expert panel recommends.

The Royal Society of Canada panel issued its report Tuesday on Health Canada's Safety Code 6, which sets out limits on exposure to radiofrequency fields aimed at protecting the health of workers and the general public.

Reaction to report

Canadians for Safe Technology, a non-profit group whose stated goal is to educate Canadians and policy makers about the dangers of exposure to unsafe levels of wireless radiation, reacted angrily to the report.

- The group accused the panel of siding with the wireless industry and ignoring scientific data warning of health risks.

The panel was asked to recommend changes to the code following a review of the latest research on adverse health effects linked to radio waves from mobile phones, Wi-Fi equipment, cellular phone towers and TV/radio broadcast antennas.

"The conclusion of the panel was that the Safety Code 6 limits are science-based and are designed to avoid all known hazards of radiofrequency radiation," said panel chair Paul Demers, director of the Occupational Cancer Research Centre in Toronto. "And we do not believe at this time that additional precautionary measures should be introduced directly into the exposure levels or limits." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cancer society kicks off Daffodil campaign

Seven-year-old cancer patient Michael Meehan adjusts Gov. Gen. David Johnston's tie during a ceremony in the greenhouses of Rideau Hall marking the beginning of the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil campaign, Tuesday, in Ottawa. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Cost to fix ignition just 57 cents: GM

Penny wise, pound foolish? It took General Motors a decade to recall faulty switch linked to 13 deaths

The piece needed to fix a defective ignition switch linked to 13 traffic deaths would have cost just 57 cents, according to documents submitted by General Motors to U.S. lawmakers investigating why the company took 10 years to recall cars with the flaw.

At a hearing Tuesday, members of a House subcommittee demanded answers from new GM CEO Mary Barra about why the automaker used the switch in small cars such as the Chevrolet Cobalt and Saturn Ion even though it knew the part didn't meet GM's own specifications.

Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., held up a switch for one of the cars and said a small spring inside it failed to provide enough force, causing car engines to turn off when they went over a bump.

DeGette showed how easy it was for a light set of keys to move the ignition out of the "run" position. That can cause the engine to stall and the driver to lose power steering and power brakes.

Since February, GM has recalled 2.6 million cars over the faulty switch, which has also been linked to 13 deaths and dozens of accidents.

A spokeswoman for GM Canada confirmed that one of the deaths associated with the faulty ignition switch was that of a Quebec motorist last June. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tapping tech to keep the liquid gold flowing

Donnie Richards of Meadowbrook Maple Syrup poses next to sap lines and a wireless radio-unit box — containing sensors that monitor sap pressure — attached to a maple tree at his Milton, Vt., sugar bush. The wireless technology is part of Tap Track, a monitoring system designed to help mid- to large-scale syrup producers keep an electronic eye on their sap vacuum lines. The radio unit transmits data to a computer or smartphone, where it shows up as a map with green dots indicating lines with good sap flow and red dots indicating leaks.

HOLLY RAMER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Call for boycott

OkCupid not OK with Mozilla's anti-gay marriage CEO

An online dating service is encouraging its users to stop using the Firefox web browser because the new CEO of the company that makes it supported California's former gay-marriage ban.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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FOR LIFE'S AWKWARD MOMENTS

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

April 1, 2014.

Mark this day as a landmark in the evolution of human relations: the publication date of The Awkward Human Survival Guide.

Finally, a way to deal with all the April fools in your life. It's brought to you by the people at Lifehacker, the website dedicated to the idea that there's a solution for everything.

Today, for example, Lifehacker features a piece on how to use a metal strainer to purée tomatoes when your blender's on the fritz … and "How to Tell Someone You Don't Like Them," an excerpt from The Awkward Human Survival Guide.

The advice turns out to be quite straightforward: Be honest but kind.

If you don't like someone romantically, the book advises you to say: "I'm not interested in you romantically." The more ambiguous "I don't think we should date" could foster false hope.

It tells the frightening story of a woman who eventually quit her job at the sock warehouse to get away from an amorous coworker who wasn't put off by her obvious lack of enthusiasm.

The honest but kind approach still hurts but "the pain will heal faster if you don't leave any room for interpretation and let them know they need to move on," say the authors.

There are a lot of potentially awkward humans out there, and the Guide provides us with a partial list: Republicans (Conservatives) Democrats (Liberals/NDP), hipsters, gun-rights crusaders, members of PETA, motorcyclists, reality TV stars, other drivers, other airline passengers, shy people, people who aren't shy, and, worst of all, writers. Columnists, for example.

One of my favourite techniques in The Awkward Human Survival Guide for dealing with all of the above is not to assume anything because, of course, "assume" makes an a-- out of you and me.

Don't assume the people in the next apartment having loud sex that keeps you up all night know you can hear them, and that if you can, it bothers you, and that if it bothers you, they care.

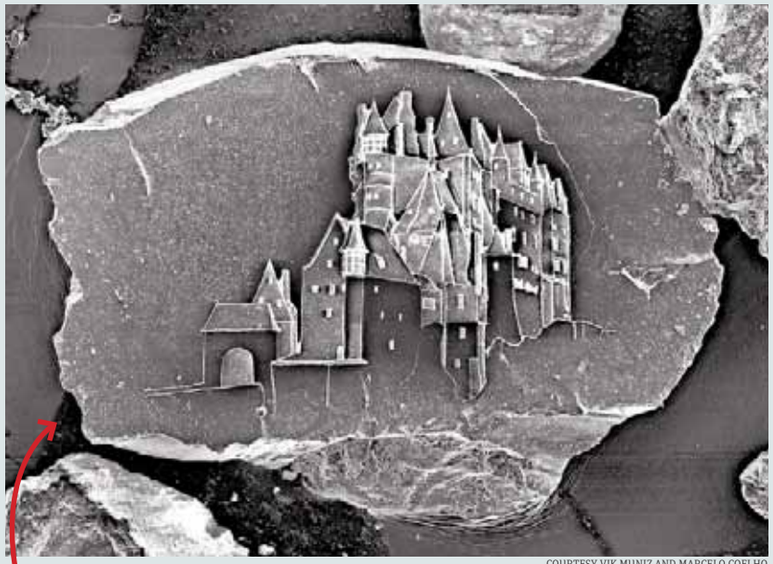
So, to cover all those potential challenges, the authors recommend a basic formula: "You may not be aware, but your behaviour (loud sex, picking your teeth, squeezing my arm) is making me uncomfortable (keeping me awake, creeping me out, causing me to panic). You're entitled to your own personal choices, but perhaps we can come up with a compromise that suits us both (quieter sex, floss in private, give me a little space here)."

This is such a potentially powerful tool that I'm going out right now to try it out on a few Conservative reality TV stars stopped at a nearby red light.

I'll let you know if I make it through the day.

ZOOM

Microscopic abode



COURTESY VIK MUNIZ AND MARCELO COELHO

Castles built on grains of sand

Artist Vik Muniz and designer Marcelo Coelho have teamed up to etch pictures of castles on individual grains of sand — a project four years in the making. The Brazilian duo paired up to use a painstaking technique of using an ion beam to draw images less than half a millimetre in length of European castles. METRO

Artist says:

"When someone tells you it's a grain of sand, there's a moment where your reality falls apart and you have to reconstruct it. You have to step back and ask what the image is and what it means."

Vik Muniz

Machine fires ions to etch drawing

Muniz drew the castles using a camera lucida, a 19th-century optical aid for sketching. Coelho then etched the drawings onto a grain using a focused ion beam that's capable of creating a line 50 nanometres wide. An electron microscope then fired electrons to scan the entire grain to make the final picture. METRO

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MetroTube

Cats react to cat videos by … licking themselves

ANDREW FIFIELD
metronews.ca

So it's fairly safe to say that we all agree April Fools' Day is the worst, right? Enter the mighty Fine Brothers of Kids React To Viral Videos fame to use it as a chance to throw up a mirror that reveals our own ugliness. "You say you like cats? You say you love cat videos? Then here is your nirvana. You maniacs."

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SCENE

See that symbol? It means you can scan this image with your Metro News app to see a gallery of behind-the-scene photos from the Captain America: The Winter Soldier set.

Superhero by Cappy accident

Character study. Captain America nearly made his comic book debut as Super American — and it took decades before he returned to true patriotic form in film

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Chris Evans and Scarlett Johansson in Captain America: The Winter Soldier. CONTRIBUTED

Captain America, played by Chris Evans in this weekend's superhero flick Captain America: The Winter Soldier, was almost tagged with a different patriotic name by creator Joe Simon.

In 1940, when he first imagined the character, he dubbed his creation Super American. Then he had a change of heart.

"There were too many 'Supers' around," he said. "Captain America had a good sound to it. There weren't a lot of captains in comics."

The first issue of the new Captain America comic was an instant hit. Released on December 20, 1940, and featuring Cap giving Adolph Hitler a knuckle sandwich, it sold almost one million copies.

Numbers like that should have attracted Hollywood's attention, but Captain America's screen debut was inauspicious. In 1943, Republic Films decided to launch a superhero serial based either on the mysterious masked character The Copperhead or the caped do-gooder Mr. Scarlet. Scripts were prepared, but before cameras rolled, the decision was made to insert Captain America into the story without radically altering the screenplays.

As a result, the character bares only a passing resemblance to the comics. In the serials he has a different secret identity and fights evildoer The Scarab instead of Nazis. His famous invincible shield is missing, as is his sidekick Bucky and there is no mention of the Super-Soldier Serum that transformed him from zero to hero.

Nonetheless, the 15-part serial — which featured exciting titles like Blade of Wrath and Vault of Vengeance — was very popular, but unfortunately did little to further the career of its star Dick Purcell. Legend has it that the strain of playing the active character was too much for him and he passed away just three weeks after filming was complete.

Despite the success of the serial, it would be half a century until Captain America was featured in another story shot for the big screen. In 1990's Captain America, Cappy is played by Matt Salinger, son of author J. D. Salinger, who beat out Dolph Lundgren and Arnold Schwarzenegger for the part.

The movie returned the character to his comic book roots, and was originally set for a 1990 release to coincide with 50th anniversary of the character but was shelved until 1992 — perhaps because of what Entertainment Weekly called a "shapeless blob of a plot" — when it was released on home video.

Captain America is possibly the most patriotic of all superheroes, but the name also pops up in one of the most famous counter-culture movies of the 1960s. In Easy Rider, Peter Fonda's character Wyatt is nicknamed Captain America after his Harley Davidson Captain America chopper.

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Whitford hopes A-listers don't ruin TV

Trophy Wife star.
Actor praises the medium for its quality writing and the big breaks it offers

Bradley Whitford, right, in a recent episode of Trophy Wife. CTV

With A-listers like Matthew McConaughey, Julia Roberts and Halle Berry jumping to TV, actor Bradley Whitford marvels at how the show-biz stigma of the small screen is now a thing of the past.

Whitford is best known for his role as deputy chief of staff Josh Lyman on NBC's critically acclaimed series The West Wing (1999-2006).

"I remember thinking, 'Oh, thank God there's this snobbery about TV,'" the 54-year-old actor said in a recent interview. "I was getting better writing by an exponential amount than Meryl Streep when I was on West Wing. I was so grateful.

"Now unfortunately, all the movie stars, the big flossers, have realized that not only do you get great writing, (but) it's a really satisfying way of storytelling ... It's not about blowing stuff up."

He hopes this trend won't mean qualified actors will be overlooked for someone with a bigger name.

"If anybody had any idea that Breaking Bad was gonna be a tenth as successful as it was, (creator) Vince (Gilligan) would not have been allowed to write it," Whitford said. "Bryan (Cranston) would not have been allowed to be in it. None of that beautiful cast would be in it. Same with The Sopranos. We never would've met James Gandolfini if anybody thought it was gonna be successful."

Whitford said that was true to a certain extent with The West Wing.

"Nobody thought it was gonna work. 'You can't have a fake president. It's about politics — that never works!'" he said. "People found it and it grew to be much bigger than we ever thought it would be."

Whitford stars on the comedy Trophy Wife (airing Tuesdays on CTV at 9:30 p.m. ET). He plays an older husband with a younger wife (Malin Akerman). His character has two ex-wives (Marcia Gay Harden and Michaela Watkins).

Despite the show's title, Akerman's Kate isn't a stereotypical piece of arm candy for Whitford's Pete, any more than TBS's Cougar Town is about older women paired with younger men.

Ratings for Trophy Wife have been so-so, but Whitford is hoping for a second season. He said he was "looking to do something different, and comedy was definitely something I was looking for."

He also wanted to work with Harden. He has seen her Tony-winning performance in Broadway's God of Carnage four times. "It was bordering on stalking," he said.

"By the way," Whitford added, "on West Wing, I was one of the young guys and now (on Trophy Wife) I'm Wilford (expletive) Brimley. It's prostate jokes and stuff! There was no segue way!" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"On West Wing I was one of the young guys and now (on Trophy Wife) I'm Wilford (expletive) Brimley. It's prostate jokes and stuff!"

Bradley Whitford, actor

Reznor says his music still has 'a long ways to go'

Trent Reznor of Nine Inch Nails performs in Mexico City on March 27.
REBECCA BLACKWELL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trent Reznor says he feels "a fresh new start" for Nine Inch Nails after the band's latest album and world tour.

Reznor released Hesitation Marks in September after his long, self-imposed hiatus. In the five years since the industrial rockers' last offering, he won an Academy Award for his soundtrack work on The Social Network, married musician Mariqueen Maandig and became a father to two young boys.

"In these few years, I kind of accidentally got into scoring films. I started a new band: How to Destroy Angels. We put two records out. I tried writing a TV show for HBO, which failed. I started a family, and surprisingly, I found myself inspired by that," Reznor told The Associated Press before playing over the weekend at the Lollapalooza festival in Chile.

And he felt like writing some Nine Inch Nails songs.

At first Reznor was hesitant about embarking on tour. "But we started rehearsing and it was fun, it felt fresh. I've been looking at things through finite eyes," he said. "Life feels different at 48 than it did at 24. I don't know how much longer I'll be doing this, or people will care ... it's not as endless as it once seemed, so I treat it more preciously."

While on tour, Reznor is also working on scoring director David Fincher's upcoming film Gone Girl.

"The main thing that I'm concerned about is putting myself in positions and places that are often uncomfortable, to force myself to grow as an artist," Reznor said. "I don't think I've written the best songs I can write. I don't think I know how to write songs very well yet. I'm not saying that to be humble, but I've got a long ways to go." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Chris Martin ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

No love lost between Gwyneth and neighbours — but Chris is popular

If Chris Martin leaves L.A. for London in his split from Gwyneth Paltrow, he'll also be leaving behind the couple's $10-million US Brentwood mansion — and the aggravated neighbours that go with it, according to Radar Online.

"When they moved in, they had 'Do not trespass' signs put up at their school and all over their property. Then they had the big gates put in and four layers of trees," one neighbour says. "It's against the zoning laws to do it, as it ruins the sense of community if everyone had those gates." And it appears that Martin was the more popular one in that neighbourhood: "We used to see Chris walking the dogs. He was a really nice guy. He was the one with the talent. She was just the one writing cookbooks," the neighbour continues.

"It's weird timing. He was building a studio in the back of the house, so it makes no sense he wanted to leave here. He seemed happy. But she wasn't as popular on the street." METRO WORLD NEWS

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Men or women? Miranda doesn't Kerr

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Newly broken up with Orlando Bloom, supermodel Miranda Kerr is ready to meet an eligible gentleman caller — or possibly lady caller. She's attracted to women as well as men, she tells British GQ (via Us).

"I appreciate both men and women," she says. "I love the female body and truly appreciate the female form. I really enjoy sketching women, especially their backs. I definitely need a man in the bedroom, however — a nice strong chest to lie on." So does that mean she wouldn't date a woman? Not necessarily. "I want to explore," she says. "Never say never."

I'm pretty sure that if Miranda Kerr is asking, absolutely no one, male or female, is saying never. I know what you're thinking: What if sex with Miranda Kerr is simply awful, though? Not to worry — she welcomes constructive criticism. "I always ask for a critique on my performance. I always want to better myself in every way," she reveals.

A beautiful lingerie model who demands notes on how to better please her partner? Miranda Kerr is making the rest of us look bad. Oh, she also claims that sex tones her stomach. Know what tones my stomach? Nothing.

Rumours of Chris Evans' retirement have been greatly exaggerated

Captain America star Chris Evans would appreciate it if you'd cool it with those reports that he's retiring from acting.

A recent interview Evans gave in Variety led to headlines that he'd be giving onscreen work a rest once his current run as the first Avenger was up. "If I'm acting at all, it's going to be under Marvel contract or I'm going to be directing," he said in the initial interview.

"I can't see myself pursuing acting strictly outside of what I'm contractually obligated to do."

But Evans insists he didn't mean he's giving up acting. "(Suddenly I'm) retiring, hanging up the shoes, I guess," he jokes to Good Morning America during an appearance. "By no means am I planning on retiring." METRO WORLD NEWS

Chris Evans

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See that symbol? It means you can scan this photo with your Metro News app to see more photos of Andrew John Virtue Dobson's tour of the island.

Making the most out of a meandering Maui road trip

Conquering the coast. Verdant views and luxury eats are just a few of the things awaiting you on this epic adventure

ANDREW JOHN VIRTUE DOBSON
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Why not try a road trip across lush Maui? PHOTOS: ANDREW DOBSON/METRO

Widely trumpeted as the world's most glamourous vacation destination, the island of Maui offers quality beaches, a variety of jaw-dropping landscapes and a vast range of thrills for adventure travellers and culinary aficionados. A visit to Maui is a once-in-a-lifetime vacation full of details to recount at dinner parties and daydream about during abysmal grey office hours in the middle of winter. For those looking to throw their hair to the wind on an ultimate road trip, Maui offers coastal highways and dreamy zigzags through lush jungle back routes. While digging your feet into the beach at a luxe resort is likely to be a must-do on your itinerary, don't forget to check out the road less travelled.

Luxurious Wailea

Upscale Wailea offers golf courses, glamourous condominiums, haute couture shopping bonanzas and a string of five-star hotels. A short 30-minute drive south of the airport, Maui's most famous razzle-dazzle resort community is the perfect spot to start your adventure. Conquer that nasty jet lag from the comfort of a spacious suite at the Fairmont Kea Lani. Snack on locally grown macadamia nuts while watching the sun set over the Pacific from your private balcony.

Farm visits in upcountry

Visit Maui's favourite farmers in the heart of upcountry. Guests to Surfing Goat Dairy have an opportunity to meet and greet herds of excitable goats as well as learn about the cheesemaking process, finishing with a sampling of the dairy's award-winning chevre-and-chocolate truffles. A stone's throw down the road, enjoy cocktails at Ocean Vodka, the island's favourite homegrown spirit. Fans of France will adore the Ali'I Kula Lavender Farm which offers guests an opportunity to purchase a variety of sweet-smelling beauty products and epicurean treats. Be sure to soak in the sun on their café patio with a hot cup of lavender tea and enjoy a picture-perfect view.

Maui boasts some of the most beautiful views in the world.

Feast at Lele

In the heart of Lahaina, a few steps from the calm lap of the ocean, throngs of tourists gather by the beach as the sun sets across the Pacific. They're eager with anticipation for the Feast at Lele, an inspired cross between a lu'au and an al fresco fine dining restaurant that, for once, lavishes as much care on the food as its entertainment. Sexy male waiters dressed in floral sarongs serve tropical cocktails, as well as an epic feast showcasing the culinary traditions of the Polynesian Islands.

Hana's natural wonders

The routinely romanticized Road To Hana offers motorists a dreamy out-of-this-world highway adventure to one of the most tranquil locales in all of Hawaii. Be sure to explore Haleakala National Park for its towering 400-ft. Waimoku Falls and Wai'anapanapa State Park where fine black sand and moody caves offer swim fans a unique spot to soak in the sun. Before hopping back on the road, treat yourself at the Travaasa Spa, an award-winning resort that Oprah and her entourage are said to fancy.

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Bucket List

The Galapagos Islands

Vision Travel has announced a cruise of the Galapagos Islands this coming November, escorted by Canadian artist and environmentalist Robert Bateman. Home to many unique species of birds and animals, these islands off the coast of Ecuador have been the focus of Bateman's work for decades. This exclusive trip aboard the 295-foot National Geographic Endeavour, operated by Lindblad Expeditions, is only open to 96 guests. The itinerary includes snorkeling with penguins and sea lions, kayaking, walking with wildlife unperturbed by your presence and nightly lectures from Bateman and a team of wildlife specialists. Prices start at $6,500. Visit vision2000travel.com. DOUG WALLACE/METRO

Your Euro to-do list for summer

Get thee to the Continent in 2014.
Here are a few things to check out on the other side of the pond

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

Riga, Latvia is one of the cities that has been named a 2014 European Capital of Culture. ISTOCK

Europe will be showcasing a variety of cultural and historical events in 2014.

Capitals of Culture

Umeå, Sweden and Riga, Latvia have been named the 2014 European Capitals of Culture. With that designation comes a year of art exhibits, musical events and cultural festivities in each city. Relatively unknown, Umeå is located 600 kilometres north of Stockholm and will focus a large part of its program on the indigenous Sami people. Slightly better known, Riga offers visitors a lively restaurant and café scene and cobblestone streets lined with medieval timber-frame houses. With more than 800 art nouveau structures around the city, Riga will be highlighting its unique architectural offerings alongside its arts program.

Welcome home!

Scotland is ready to party and is showcasing everything Scottish by throwing a Homecoming celebration, with numerous events and festivals planned throughout 2014. A highlight will be the XX Commonwealth Games in Glasgow from July 23 to August 3 with the finest athletes from Commonwealth countries heading to compete in 17 sports. In addition to cheering on our Canadian athletes, spectators will have the chance to see Olympic champion sprinter Usain Bolt go for gold. If you want to explore Scotland's famous highlands, hike the recently opened John Muir Trail, stretching some 160 kilometres from Dunbar to the waterfront town of Helensburgh.

The beginning of the Great War

Commemorative events, including a national church service, are being held across Britain to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. New exhibits are set to debut, notably London's Imperial War Museum's First World War Galleries. Opening in June, the galleries are part of a radical renovation of the museum. The goal is to better tell the story of the 16 million people whose lives were claimed by the conflict.

The beginning of the end

Elsewhere in Europe, they're marking the beginning of the end of the Second World War with events commemorating the 70th anniversary of the D-Day invasion in Normandy. The new Liberation Route of Europe will reconnect the main regions through which Allied forces moved from the United Kingdom to Berlin at the end of the War. In the Netherlands, for example, the Liberation Route will focus on 85 historical locations in three regions that played an important role in the final stages of the conflict. Each location, marked by a large boulder, will tell the story of the civilians and soldiers who lived and fought there in 1944-45. As you walk, bike or drive the route you can download the accompanying audio stories for free as MP3s from liberationroute.com.

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New

Shangri-La at the Shard

The Shangri-La Hotel opens in the London Shard on May 6. Taking up floors 34 to 52 in the 72-storey, 306-metre glass tower on the South Bank, the hotel will be the tallest in town, boasting incredible 360-degree views that let you see for miles. Expect elegant Asian ornamentation, artwork by both Asian and British artists, marble bathrooms, heated floors and well-heeled international guests. Visit shangrila.com/london/shangrila.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO

Tool

Group trips made easy

Travelling with pals, as fun as it is, is often difficult to arrange. Usually, one organized person has to pin everyone down to get a consensus on flights, hotels and activities, with endless emails. After a year out of beta, FlightsWithFriends.com is getting even better at taking the sting out of making plans, letting you find flights and hotels together in real time, consolidating budgets and opinions — everyone participates. No more Reply Alls. **DOUG WALLACE/METRO**

Deals

Myrtle Beach bargains

Poor Myrtle Beach. Everybody thinks it's in Florida. But sunny South Carolina is home to this 60-mile stretch of beach heaven known as the Grand Strand. And booking one of the 90,000 hotel rooms, condos and beach houses in the region is plum right now, with some hotel sales hooked to instant rebates, 25-per-cent-off packages, third-night-free deals and free breakfast. It's almost like they're all trying to outdo each other. Go to VisitMyrtleBeach.com.

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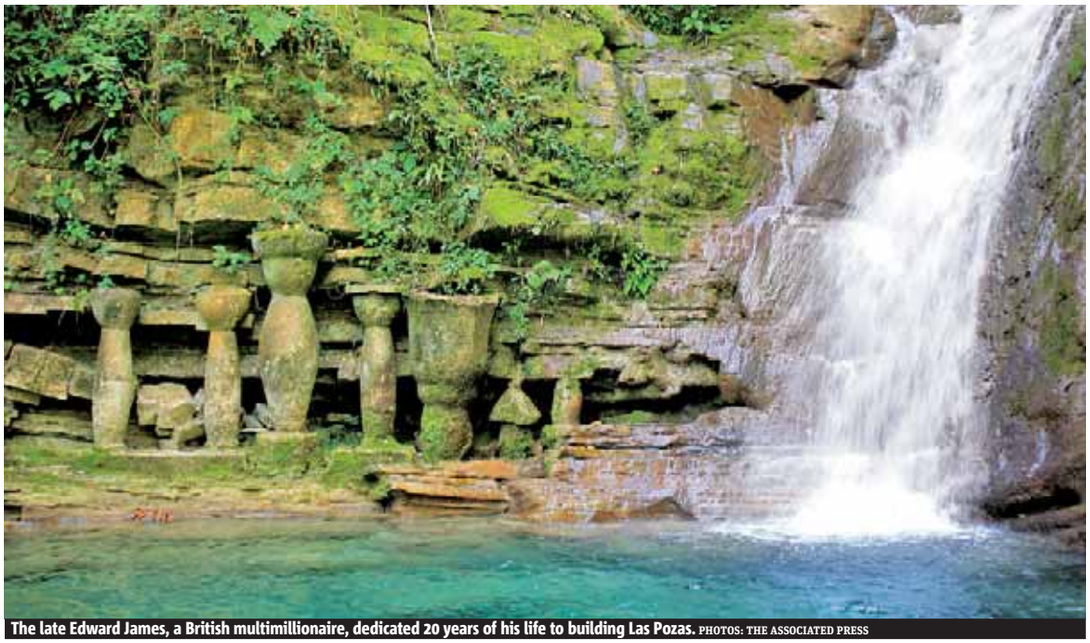

The late Edward James, a British multimillionaire, dedicated 20 years of his life to building Las Pozas. PHOTOS: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The sculptures at Las Pozas evoke ancient Greece.

Step into the surreal at Las Pozas

Welcome to the jungle. Art park in Mexico was the vision of eccentric millionaire

At the end of a long, dirt road in Mexico's northeast jungle, two spiral staircases appear, leading nowhere amid an ornate concrete structure. Giant concrete fleur-de-lys flank a path, and tall bamboo-shaped columns surround a house with no walls. Oversize plaster orchids are in permanent bloom, while a natural waterfall ceaselessly flows down a mountain.

This is Las Pozas, a dreamy, little-known garden of surreal art, where sculptures evoke the ruins of ancient Greece but are overrun by exotic jungle plants. It was created by the late Edward James, a British multimillionaire and arts patron who favoured surrealists like René Magritte and Salvador Dali.

"Mr. Edward wanted to bewilder," said Carlos Barbosa, a park guide. He thought of the park "as a joke to a future civilization."

And visitors are bewildered by Las Pozas, located on a 100-acre (40-hectare) hillside where the Sierra Madre mountains and coastal plains of the northeast state of San Luis Potosi meet.

"I had seen videos and documents but I didn't expect it to be so impressive," said Vida Arellano, a tourist from the northern state of Chihuahua. "Once you are here, you are enveloped by nature, the sculptures, the architecture ... it transports you to a different mental state."

Las Pozas means the pools.

The ferocity of the jungle in these hills of the Sierra Madre, a seven-hour drive from Mexico City, has destroyed many structures in the garden. But that didn't bother James, who liked to think that future archaeologists would discover his lost city and wonder what kind of civilization had built it, Barbosa said.

James inherited a fortune from his father and used the money to support the work of great surrealists, including Dali, Magritte, Leonora Carrington and Remedios Varo. Fascinated with Mexico, he arrived in San Luis Potosi in the mid-1940s, bought land through a Mexican friend and spent the next 20 years of his life building his garden.

The park was only half-built by the time its creator died 30 years ago, but it remains an impressive work of art, with an air of mystery added by the rust and deterioration brought on by nature.

The original project, interestingly, had nothing to do with the garden's ultimate design.

For years, James cultivated thousands of orchids on his land, but in 1962 a cold snap destroyed them, said Zaira Linan, the park's assistant director. James then ordered workers to build cement flowers that weather couldn't destroy, Linan said.

The son of British aristocrats and grandson of a Canadian timber baron, James first came to Mexico in 1944 at the invitation of psychiatrist Erich Fromm. He joined a salon of intellectuals and artists at Cuernavaca, the resort city just southeast of Mexico City.

It was in Cuernavaca that he met Plutarco Gastelum, a Mexican friend who helped oversee the garden's progress as workers built wooden moulds from James' drawings and filled them with cement to create the sculptures.

James' imagination didn't stop with the flowers. He began to design increasingly complex sculptures, often inspired by artistic philosophies he encountered in his travels. He would sketch his sculptures on postcards and mail them to Gastelum.

With park guides' help, visitors can access the most remote corners of the park, including a concrete bed shaped like a tree leaf where James used to meditate and prepare for death.

But James didn't die in his precious park. He died in 1984 in San Remo, Italy, when a stroke put an end to his garden project. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

If you go...

Las Pozas. Is the closest town, about 3.2 kilometres from the garden. Mexico City is a seven-hour drive and Tampico is the nearest major airport, about four hours away. Entrance to the park is about $4. Lodging can be found in Xilitla or at the Posada James Hotel near the park.

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Deciding what you want to be doing, where you want to be doing it, and pin-pointing exactly what it's going to take to get there, requires considerable inspiration, reflection and research.

But let's face it, unless you have the budget to hire a career or life coach, it's up to you to create your career and set yourself up for the opportunities you most want.

To determine what knowledge you may need to succeed, ask people working in your target sector which skills they wish they had right now. ISTOCK

Here are four DIY opportunities that allow you to take the initiative and open doors for yourself.

Get insider industry intelligence

The challenge:

Line up an informational interview with a VIP in your field, to be conducted by phone or in-person (the latter preferred).

Getting the inside scoop on what it takes to succeed in the field can help you decide if it's a good fit.

"The more knowledge you have, the better decisions you can make about your career," advises university career services professional Katharine Brooks, plus "you'll be better prepared for the real job interview."

The prerequisites:

You're persistent, well-prepped with smart questions and have above-average communication skills — including active listening. Remember, busy people may be more inclined to meet if you have a mutual acquaintance.

Expand your referral network

The challenge:

Once weekly, line up a lunch date with someone in your extended professional network — including your loose ties online. People get jobs because of who they know. Networking doesn't end once you have made a connection; it's an active and ongoing process.

The prerequisites:

You're into reciprocity, are genuinely interested in other people, have already memorized a soft-sell version of your elevator pitch and because eating with someone in a professional context can be tricky, you have above-average dining etiquette — including negotiating multiple forks.

Develop your skills portfolio

The challenge:

Add another line to your resumé by mastering a unique and in-demand job skill.

The ability to wear many hats and deliver results beyond your job title and description sets you apart and positions you on the promotion fast track.

"Your job title should never act as a limit to what you want to achieve," advises Dharmesh Shah, founder at HubSpot.

The prerequisites:

You are curious, self-motivated and disciplined when you need to be and you genuinely enjoy learning — including via free or paid online courses, post-grad certificate programs, YouTube videos, webinars or workshops.

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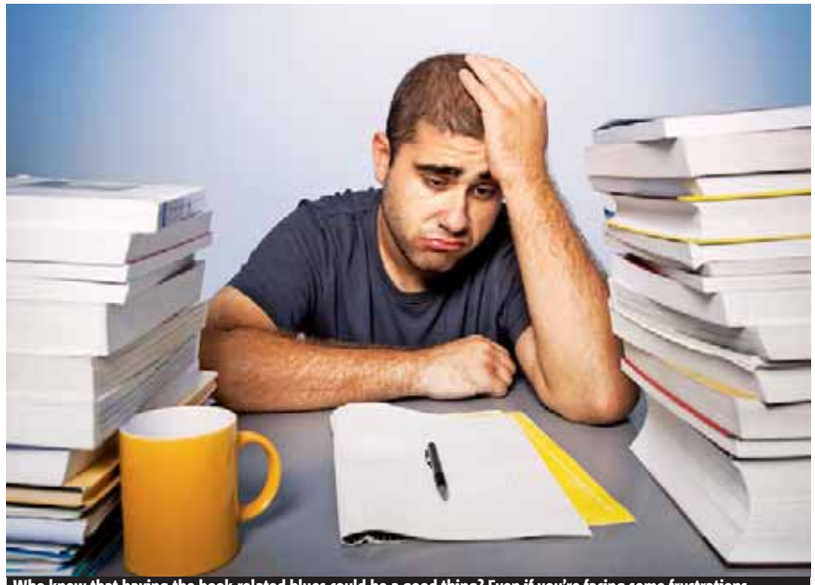


Who knew that having the book-related blues could be a good thing? Even if you're facing some frustrations, keeping your cranium active may make remembering easier. ISTOCK

Research in remembering. Think you can cram and kill that test every time? Think again. But this time think really hard

JANE BORDEN
Metro World News

Do you figure that repetition and reading for long hours are the key to learning? Not according to a new book based on the research of two Washington University professors.

"Empirical research into how we learn and remember shows that much of what we take for gospel about how to learn turns out to be largely wasted effort," reads one of the opening passages of Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning.

The work is the result of 10 years of research into the application of cognitive psychology to education practices by Henry Roediger and Mark McDaniel, both in the Department of Psychology at Washington University in St. Louis, MO.

They then enlisted the help of novelist (and Roediger's brother-in-law) Peter Brown to turn their findings into a book for a mass audience.

Brown has filled Make It Stick with illustrative anecdotes to support the academic theories.

"I have long been fascinated by (Roediger's)knowledge of how memory works," he said.

"When I heard what he, McDaniel and their colleagues were finding, it seemed like big news: Most of us are going about learning the wrong way! This was something everybody needed to hear."

For example, rereading texts won't really help you learn, and neither will repeatedly practicing tasks.

In fact, most intuitive modes of learning also came up short. The commonality among the authors' suggested practices is that in order to stick, learning must be effortful and arduous. We asked Brown why.

What is it about overcoming difficulty that makes learning stronger?

The best way to make learning stick is to focus less on getting knowledge into the brain and more on getting it out. You learn best by trying to retrieve an answer from memory, and this holds true even before we have been taught what the answer is.

How does that work?

When the brain encounters new information, the representation of that information is pliable — the brain works at making sense of the new material by filling in gaps and connecting it to what you already know.

So the brain folds information into what is already stored?

And every time you have to work hard to retrieve learning, it becomes pliable again, and as the brain reconsolidates it, the most important aspects become more prominent and the paths to the knowledge are strengthened.

But the key to this is effort. It's arduous retrieval practice that strengthens learning.

And when you mix up your practice, and the retrieval is more difficult because you're constantly switching between different topics, and it doesn't feel like you're mastering any of them, you are in fact building more complex neural connections and a more versatile ability to recall and apply the learning later.

Take-away tips

"Don't bother rereading the text or watching the instructional video repeatedly," says Brown.

"Instead, review the instructional material once or twice, then test yourself on the knowledge: Explain it, or practise the skill. Then leave it alone for awhile.

"Retrieve it from memory again when you're a little rusty and have to struggle to bring it back. When you're struggling with something, that's a great sign, because your brain is engaged."

Restaurant classic comes to your table

Beef Fajitas. Beef and vegetables are cooked together in this recipe for an easy supper

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

Sometimes when I look in the pantry, all I see are flour tortillas. Then I wonder what I should whip up with them.

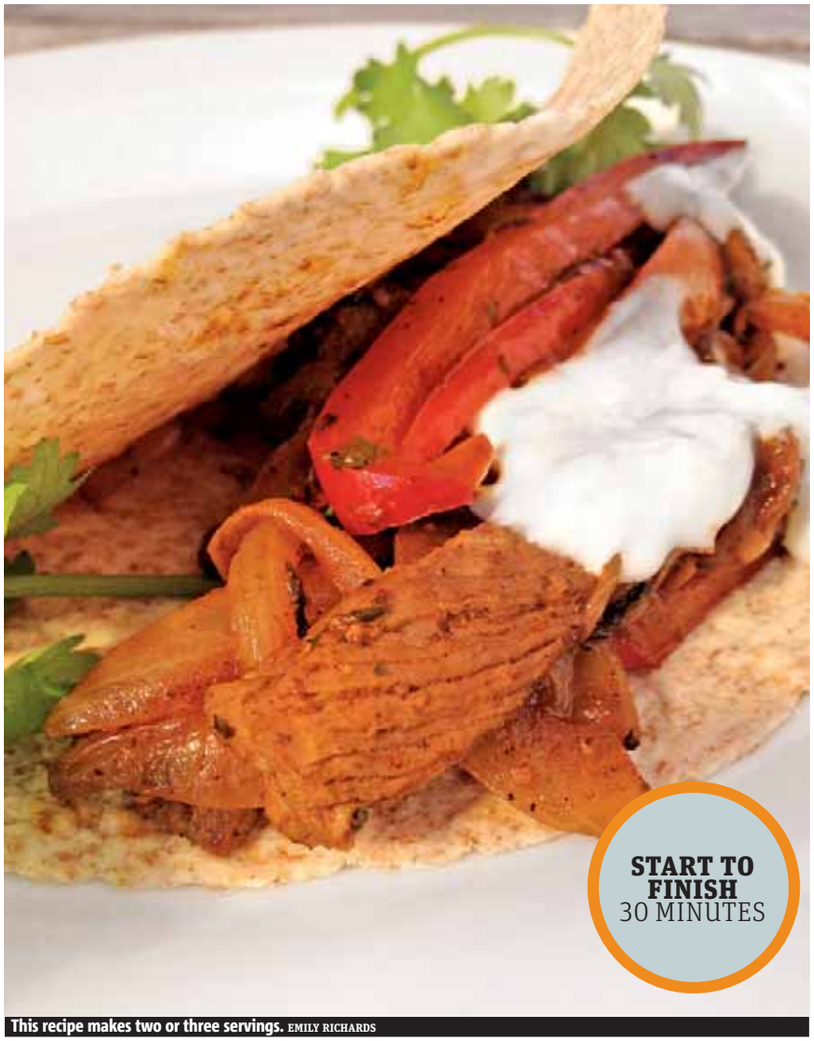
Well, most often classic recipes come to mind and they're enjoyed by everyone. These Beef Fajitas are one of those traditional recipes.

Because the veggies and meat are cooked together, you can serve the dish right from the skillet for that sizzle effect. These fajitas have some real spice to them!

However, don't be afraid to use tortillas in other ways like as a pizza base with simple toppings to enjoy with a salad or to use up leftovers from another night's meal.

You can also bake some up and use them to dip into your favourite dips.

Healthy options are easy to enjoy when you have ingredients on hand, and even with something as simple as flour tortillas, you can create easy meals for dinner or lunch.



This recipe makes two or three servings. EMILY RICHARDS

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

Ingredients

- 1 tsp (5 ml) canola oil
- 1 striploin grilling steak
- 2 tsp (10 ml) Worcestershire sauce
- Pinch cayenne
- 1 small red onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 each red and green bell peppers, sliced
- 2 tsp (10 ml) chili powder
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) each ground cumin and dried thyme leaves
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) pepper
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) pasta sauce
- 4 small whole wheat tortillas
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) light sour cream

1. In large non-stick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook steak, Worcestershire sauce and cayenne for 5 minutes or until browned. Remove to plate.

2. Return skillet to medium heat and cook onion, garlic, green and red peppers, chili powder, cumin, thyme and pepper for 8 minutes or until tender crisp. Add pasta sauce and cook for 5 minutes. Return beef to pan and cook until heated through.

3. Place the meat-vegetable mixture in centre of a tortilla and dollop with some of the sour cream, if using. Roll up and then repeat with the remaining ingredients.

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Cristiano Ronaldo has scored his fair share of pretty goals on the pitch with Real Madrid and Portugal.
He also looks good off the field with girlfriend Irina Shayk on his arm. Scan the image below with your Metro News app to vote on the hottest couples in sports.

SPORTS 4

Lind's blast carries Jays to their first win of the campaign

Blue Jays second baseman Ryan Goins tags out the Rays' Matt Joyce on a stolen-base attempt on Tuesday in St. Petersburg, Fla. Adam Lind hit a three-run home run and the Jays held on to win 4-2. BRIAN BLANCO/GETTY IMAGES

Leafs' cold stretch ends versus Flames

NHL. Buds end losing streak at 8 games to surge ahead of Caps and Stars, still trail Wings and Jackets in wild-card race

On Tuesday

3	2
Maple Leafs	Flames

Knowing his Toronto Maple Leafs couldn't win six games in a row in one night, coach Randy Carlyle tried to zero in on getting the first one.

It wasn't pretty, but the Leafs did just that, beating the Calgary Flames 3-2 Tuesday night at Air Canada Centre to snap a streak of eight straight losses in regulation.

These two points were the first Toronto picked up since beating Los Angeles on March 13. Now at 82 points, the Leafs moved ahead of the Washington Capitals, who lost to the Dallas Stars, but remained behind the Detroit Red Wings (84) and Columbus Blue Jackets (83) in the Eastern Conference wild-card race.

The Leafs (37-32-8) figure to have to run the table in their final five games — against the Boston Bruins, Winnipeg Jets, Tampa Bay Lightning, Florida Panthers and Ottawa Senators — and get help in order to make the playoffs after such a debilitating losing streak.

Beating the Flames was a start. Jay McClement, Dave Bolland and David Clarkson scored for the Leafs, who got 20 saves from goaltender Jonathan Bernier in his first victory since March 10.

Clarkson's goal was just his fifth goal of the season and first point of any kind in 17 games.

Matt Stajan and Kris Russell scored for Calgary (31-38-7), which lost for the third time in four games. Like Bernier, Karri Ramo made 20 saves. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wednesday's Metro AR poll

GETTY IMAGES

Metro AR poll results

50% Metro News readers voted Rick DiPietro's 15-year, $67.5-million contract with the New York Islanders the worst from our list of bad contracts. Here's how the rest of the underperformers fared :

19% Dion Phaneuf (7 years, $49M, 2013)

13% Gilbert Arenas (6 years, $111M, 2008)

6% Miguel Cabrera (10 years, $292M, 2014)

6% Ricky Romero (5 years, $30.1M, 2010)

6% Michael Vick (10 years, $137M, 2004)

Rick DiPietro GETTY IMAGES

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PGA

Woods to miss his first Masters

Tiger Woods chose surgery to heal his ailing back over a quest for another green jacket, announcing Tuesday that he will miss the Masters for the first time in his career.

Woods said on his website that he had surgery Monday in Utah for a pinched nerve that had been hurting him for several months, knowing the surgery would keep him from Augusta National next week for the first time since he was a senior in high school. The No. 1 player in the world is a four-time Masters champion.

"After attempting to get ready for the Masters, and failing to make the necessary progress, I decided in consultation with my doctors to have this procedure done, Woods said. "I'd like to express my disappointment to the Augusta National membership, staff, volunteers and patrons that I will not be at the Masters."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Extent of Defoe's injury still unknown

Banged up. TFC has two other players nursing injuries and one facing possible disciplinary action

Just three games into the new season, Toronto FC may be without their marquee player.

Star forward Jermain Defoe left Saturday's game against Real Salt Lake early and was scheduled to undergo a scan on his hamstring Tuesday.

Head coach Ryan Nelsen declined to discuss the extent of Defoe's injury at practice Tuesday, where the England player was noticeably absent.

"We just have to wait for the scans to come back," he said.

Defoe's just one of several Toronto FC players battling injuries early in the season. Doneil Henry is nursing a knock to his knee and fellow centre back Steven Caldwell

Toronto FC striker Jermain Defoe
RICHARD LAUTENS/TORONTO STAR

may be targeted by the league for supplemental discipline for an ugly tackle that earned him a yellow card Saturday.

Midfielder Jonathan Osorio could miss a second game with his own hamstring issue this Saturday, when Toronto travels to Ohio to take on the Columbus Crew.

There have been an unusual number of injuries early this season, Nelsen said, but he acknowledged that his team is in the unusual position of having several players adjusting to a new league, schedule and even climate. Some of those factors, such as training on artificial turf, have been tough to get used to, he said.

"It's frustrating for us, because we want to work on so much, but it takes a toll, playing on artificial (turf), when people aren't used to it."

Despite the potential holes in the team, Nelsen is confident looking forward to Saturday's game. With some of the team's biggest names out — or potentially out — other players will need to step up, he said.

"The most mature teams in the MLS who do it consistently year in and year out are the deepest," he said. "And that's the one thing that we've got to get good at."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

Champions League

Quarterfinal matches end up in draws

Manchester United confounded grim pre-game predictions by drawing 1-1 with Bayern Munich in the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal on Tuesday, with Bastian Schweinsteiger equalizing for the holders before being sent off at Old Trafford.

In Barcelona, a 71st minute equalizer from Neymar saw Barcelona salvage a 1-1 draw at home to Atlético Madrid after a stunning opener by Diego Ribas in the first leg of the Spanish rival's Champions League quarterfinal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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2015 Hyundai Genesis

- **Type.** Four-door, all-wheel drive full-size sedan
- **Engines (hp).** 3.8-litre DOHC V6 (311); 5.0-litre DOHC V8 (420)
- **Transmissions.** Eight-speed automatic
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $44,800

All-wheel drive

The powertrains are positioned inside a more rigid platform necessitated by the addition of all-wheel drive — the first for any Hyundai passenger car. The system, comes standard on both V6 and V8 models and distributes the torque 40:60 front-to-rear in normal driving conditions, but can send up to 90 per cent to the front, or 100 per cent to the back wheels if slippage is detected.

Fuel option

Hyundai states that both engines can use either premium or regular fuel without problem, although if the latter is used, some unspecified power reductions will occur.

Safety systems

Safety systems for the Genesis include automatic emergency braking, blind spot and cross-traffic alerts, lane-departure warning and parking assists. There's also a carbon dioxide sensor control system that pumps in fresh air automatically whenever carbon dioxide levels increase, helping to prevent drowsy driving.

Hyundai's new beginning

Review. Competitors? As a second effort, the 2015 Hyundai Genesis marches to its own beat

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

PHOTOS: WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

In the beginning, Hyundai was focused on building small, inexpensive cars for the masses. Now the Korea-based automaker's offerings span nearly every niche, from entry-level basic to imposing luxo-cruisers.

Since the 2009 model year, the Genesis sedan has taken up residence at the premium end of the market (directly below the Equus) and the new-for-2015 edition arriving this spring maintains that spot.

The previous Genesis appeared as a compilation of several full-size luxury marques, including the Lexus LS, BMW 5- and 7-series and Mercedes-Benz E- and S-Class sedans. This time, however, Hyundai appears confident enough in its own in-house styling prowess that the Genesis is taking its own path, although some resemblance to the Audi A7 is evident.

Most unique is the trapezoidal grille that, when combined with fancy LED (Light Emitting Diode) headlight pods and running lights, give the Genesis a character all its own. The sweeping roofline ends at a truncated decklid flanked by an equally impressive set of LED taillights.

Although Hyundai retained the Genesis's overall length to within a few centimetres of the previous design, it did extend the distance between the front and rear wheels by 7.5 centimetres, resulting in increased space for all passengers.

Those riders will experience a cabin that's much simpler than before. Hyundai has shown admirable restraint in keeping the knob, button and switch count to a minimum (many controls are now accessed through the touch-screen display), even though the steering wheel has picked up some of the slack.

Compare

1 Chrysler 300 AWD
Base price: $40,800
Solid, powerful, full-size sedan with optional AWD and 470-horse-power V8

2 Lexus ES
Base price: $40,250
Popular FWD V6 luxury sedan is also available as a gas-electric hybrid

3 Cadillac CTS AWD
Base price: $55,300
New-for-2014 model can be had with AWD and in 420-hp turbo-V-Sport trim

DRIVE

Downsizing (without downsizing)

Bentley Continental GT V8. This sleek luxury ride offers 40 per cent better fuel economy without making any compromises

MALCOLM GUNN
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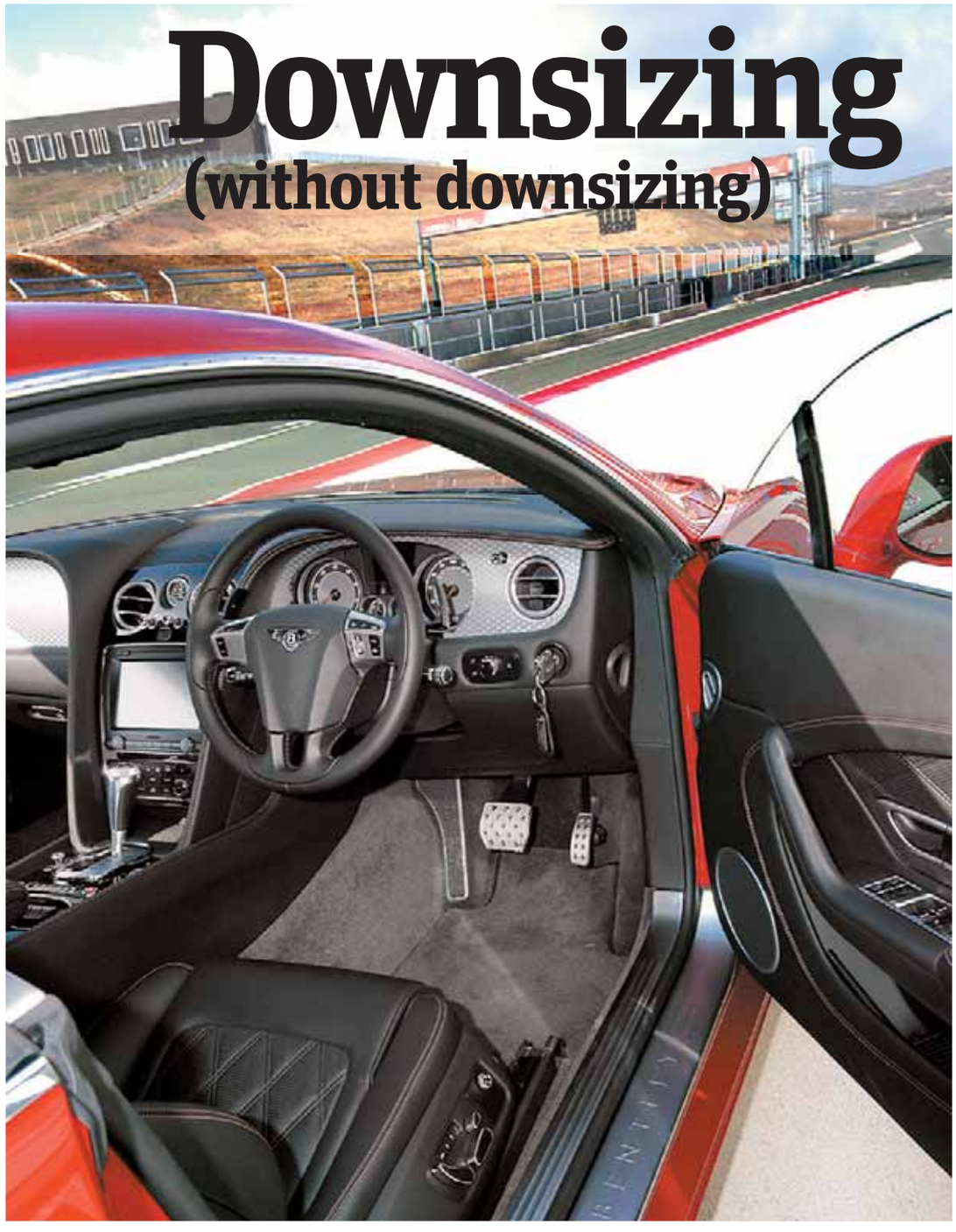

Ford is introducing a turbocharged 1.0-litre three-cylinder engine in its lineup. Mini is also putting in a three-cylinder for 2014.

Bentley? This luxury brand can't expect a 1.0-litre engine to move a big high-performance machine with any authority at all. But that doesn't mean that fuel consumption is not top of mind.

A socially responsible luxury car nudging $215,000 might seem like a contradiction. Maybe even an impossibility. You might even laugh at the notion.

But apparently rich people also want to feel a bit better about the dent they're putting in Mother Nature's front bumper. At least that's Bentley's spin on the two-door Continental GT V8 that drops four pistons from the program and picks up 40 per cent fuel economy while giving up very little, if anything, when it comes to performance and luxury.

That might be what a Bentley customers consider a "green" solution, but the bottom line is that it's still a 500-horsepower twin-turbocharged 2,300-kilogram coupe with all-wheel drive. And on this afternoon at Circuito de Navarra in northern Spain, fuel economy and social responsibility are the furthest thing from everyone's mind.

The V8 engine gives away 67 horsepower but just 29 pound-feet of torque to the 12-cylinder model while the absence of four cylinders provides a weight savings of 25 kilograms over the front wheels and 50 kilograms overall. More importantly, the Continental's weight bias has shifted to a more balanced 51/49 front/rear ratio compared to the 54/46 for the 12-cylinder car.

On the track and the nearby two-lane highways, the V8 feels lighter on its feet, which makes the car more composed and responsive when cornering. The big coupe really does go where it's pointed with minimal objections from the front suspension.

Bentley's stopwatch numbers indicate a zero-to-100 km/h time of 4.6 seconds for the V8, barely two-tenths slower than the 12-cylinder car. The claimed 300 km/h top speed is 15 slower than its stable mate, not that it really matters to the vast majority of buyers who will seldom travel at even half that speed.

The raspy-sounding 4.0-litre V8 was jointly produced with VW's Audi division, where its derivatives are installed in the S7 and S8 sedans. However, Bentley took its own path in developing the engine's innards, including the addition of cylinder deactivation that shuts down half the pistons under light or no-load conditions to reduce fuel consumption. Another fuel-saving measure is the eight-speed automatic transmission (two more cogs than the 12 cylinder) that comes with manual shift controls plus its own separate coolant circulation system.

If you're into spirited driving, or a track day, make certain you select the virtually fade-proof carbon ceramic brake pad option for the massive 16-inch front rotors and 13-inch rears.

Socially responsible? That depends on which end of the buying spectrum you're coming from.

Tooling around the Spanish countryside in both models gives one pause as to how the car might be received in a land where one-quarter of its workforce is unemployed. However those concerns were dispelled while rumbling through one village where an elderly gent raised his cap at the passing parade of opulence and with a broad smile bowed in salute.

It might not be a Prius, a Volt or a Leaf, but the Continental GT V8 is a car that delivers driving passion, luxury and prestige to a select group of buyers who can also feel a bit better about their choice.

The convertible has the same mechanicals as the coupe, but the steering is lighter to suit the cruiser crowd. ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASE MEDIA

Distinctive looks

Visually, the V8 distinguishes itself with its front air dam and matte finish mesh-type grille. Yes, it's a subtle difference, but it's more in keeping with the coupe's sporty character. Also noticeable are the distinctive standard and optional 20-inch wheels, and the front and rear winged Bentley logo with a red background. There are coupe and convertible models of the V8, the latter called the GTC.

Luxury cars and racing helmets? The Continental GT V8 is still a performance machine.

The Continental GT's brake rotors are the biggest on almost any passenger car.

The 4.0-litre V8 is down just five per cent on peak torque when compared to the 12-cylinder model.

Tacoma offers a smart and solid pickup option

Second gear.
2005 to 2013
Toyota Tacoma

JUSTIN
PRITCHARD
drive@metronews.ca

PHOTO: PROVIDED

It's hard to deny the wholesome sensibility of owning a little Japanese pickup truck — and few are more popular than the Toyota Tacoma.

Tacoma has a proven reputation for being capable, thrifty, reliable, and even a bit on the sporty side. Look for a plethora of combinations in the used market — including no fewer than three body styles, two engines, two drivelines and a range of options, packages and trim.

The test drive

If opting for a 2009 or later model, confirm full functionality of the stereo system, including volume control. Numerous owners have reported wonky stereo head units that fail to respond to volume adjustments, won't power on, or turn themselves off right in the middle of your favourite Eagles tune.

Confirm proper operation of the air conditioner system — as a bad condenser may render the AC system useless.

While cruising, attempt to focus on the front and rear differential of the Tacoma with your ears, listening for any unwelcome rubbing or whining sounds. Some owners have reported differential problems, especially relating to the front differential.

Be sure to 'feel' the Tacoma's automatic transmission for signs of hard shifting, particularly at light to moderate throttle and between first and second gear. Hard shifting could be caused by a number of things — including low transmission fluid, the need for revised transmission computer programming, or potential transmission damage. Transmission gripes seem limited mainly to early models in this generation, and are relatively rare.

What owners like

Typical Tacoma owners report a comfortable ride, a truck that feels 'safe' and 'solid', all-weather confidence with 4x4 models, a 'ready for anything' attitude and plenty of flexibility.

What owners dislike

Complaints may include poor performance from the four-cylinder engine, the 'shallow' cargo box, a noisy highway ride in terms of wind noise, and interior materials that are easily scratched and damaged.

Engine

Tacoma's engine selection consists of a 2.7-litre four-cylinder engine with dual camshafts and 16 valves for 159 horsepower and 180 pounds feet of torque. A four-litre V6 can be fitted, delivering 236 horses. Both engines could be mated to manual or automatic transmissions.

The verdict

Find the used Tacoma you're after, test drive with the above information in mind, and buy confidently once you've got a two-thumbs-up from your mechanic. A healthy and properly maintained Tacoma should be a fantastic used truck investment that can be enjoyed for years to come.

All fear the pothole now that winter is over

Mind the gap. Having eroded over the cold season, many roads are cracked and riddled with potential tire bursters, just don't be speeding if you hit one

JIL
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Along with warmer weather and the first flowers, spring also brings potholes. Not only are they annoying when you're driving, but if they're large enough, they have the potential to do serious damage to your vehicle.

"It depends on how you hit it, and how fast you're going," says Teresa Kostick, owner of All Line CARSTAR Auto Body, near Chicago. "And even though you're hitting it with your front wheel first, you may have a problem with the rear wheel too, because it will go into the same pothole."

Potholes happen when water seeps through cracks in the asphalt to the ground below. When it freezes, it pushes the pavement up and also creates an indentation under it. When warmer weather arrives and the ice melts, cars driving over the asphalt break it apart, and a pothole is born.

The wheel initially takes the blow, and a hard bump can bend a rim or even blow out a tire. Even if the tire stays in place, a bent rim can cause it to gradually lose air, eventually leaving you with a flat tire. Hitting the pothole can also dislodge the wheel weights, leaving the wheel unbalanced.

A hard hit can potentially damage steering or suspension components, affect your brakes, crack the air dam or front fascia, or in severe conditions, even damage a wheel well or fender.

Warning signs of damage can include clunking or grinding noises when you're steering or using the brakes, vibration when you're driving, the vehicle pulls to one side, or the steering wheel is off-centre. All of these can be safety issues, and you should get the vehicle checked as soon as possible.

Even if nothing's broken, you may still need an alignment, which should be done promptly. If you keep driving it like that, it can cause uneven tire wear. The car could also steer or brake erratically if you need to make an emergency manoeuvre. If you see a pothole, slow down before you get to it, not when you're about to hit it. Jamming on the brakes causes your vehicle to nosedive, which can potentially cause even more damage.

"Leave enough distance between you and the vehicle ahead so you can see potholes," Kostick says. "Lower your speed, and if you can't avoid the pothole, go over it as slowly as you can."

Take note

- **Eyes peeled.** Watch for puddles when the rest of the road is dry; there could be deep potholes under the water.
- **Check just in case.** Depending on circumstances, you may be able to make a claim to the municipality or your insurance company for pothole damage.

Kia's electric Soul. KIA CANADA

Feel the heat in new electric Kia Soul

New HVAC system.
Compact CUV boasts innovative and efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning mechanism

JIL MCINTOSH
Drive@metronews.ca

While the battery in an electric car provides the power for driving, that's not all it does. It also runs such things as the lights, stereo and climate control, all of which cut down on the car's driving range.

The heater presents the greatest challenge. In a gasoline-powered car, heat from the engine is used to warm the cabin. Since the electric motors in battery-powered cars don't get hot enough for this, automakers add electric heaters, which draw a lot of power.

Kia, which is introducing a new electric version of its Soul compact CUV, has developed an innovative heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system to reduce energy usage.

"The main reason for the new HVAC system is to reduce the load on the battery," says S.J. Kim, Soul product manager for Kia Motors. "We have placed particular focus on maximizing heating efficiency."

Like a conventional car, the Soul EV's HVAC system uses a compressor, evaporator, and condenser, but it also includes a new, highly efficient heat pump. The pump uses waste heat from the car's electrical components to enhance the heating system and save electricity. Even in extremely cold temperatures, it can increase heating efficiency by as much as 30 per cent.

"Heating consumes more energy than cooling in electric vehicles," Kim says. "This is why we have applied the heat pump system to the Soul EV. Although the heat-pump system is a known technology and can be found in household heaters-coolers, it is challenging to apply this system to electric vehicles because of factors such as external temperature change while a vehicle is in motion."

To further save power, Kia uses a "smart" air induction control. Cars need fresh air in the cabin to keep the occupants comfortable, but it must be heated or cooled. The new system recycles as much interior air as possible, since it's already at the right temperature, and adds only enough outside air to keep the cabin fresh.

The car also features an all-new ventilation system, the first on any production vehicle, that can be set to the driver's side alone. If a driver is alone in the car, he or she can push a button that completely shuts off the dashboard and floor vents on the passenger side. Since the system no longer has to heat or cool the whole car, it uses less battery power, which adds to the car's driving range.

Quoted

"The main reason for the new HVAC system is to reduce the load on the battery."

S.J. Kim, Soul product manager for Kia Motors

Take note

- **While gasoline cars don't need heat pumps, Kia may eventually add the air induction control and individual ventilation to other models.**
- **Like other electric cars, the Soul EV's cabin can be preheated or cooled when it's plugged in before driving, increasing its range.**
- **In gasoline cars, hot antifreeze from the engine runs through a heater core, which is used to warm the interior.**

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Volvo could lead wave of cars from China

Geely. China's auto industry lacks presence in North America, but an analyst predicts we'll start seeing its cars in five years

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
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Volvo's first factory in China produces the S60 sedan for domestic Chinese consumption, but executives suggest it could also be exported to North America in the near future. COURTESY VOLVO CARS OF CANADA

Back in 2006, Geely became the first Chinese automaker to hold an exhibit at the Detroit auto show. It created so much buzz it made it hard to walk properly at the show. You had to wade through it.

Seemed like it would be only a matter of months before all North Americans would be driving Chinese-made vehicles, to match all the Chinese-made clothes, shoes and sunglasses we were already wearing.

But then the buzz died. And the Chinese makers never showed up.

Currently there is only one Chinese-made vehicle available for sale in the Canadian market — the Honda Fit. Honda used to get them from Japan, but production constraints there, as well as a too-high Japanese yen, made the Chinese factory a better option. And it's just a temporary thing, too, as Honda gets its Mexican plant ready to build the next-generation North American Fit.

In retrospect, the Chinese industry was clearly not ready to enter mature markets like North America and Europe, even though their domestic industry was going gangbusters. They had difficulty meeting the emission and safety standards in developed countries, and their cars were far from esthetic and/or technical knockouts.

Lack of dealer or retail infrastructure is another hurdle, one that requires deep pockets. While many Chinese automakers are not small, they are not large either by global standards. The smaller, private ones don't seem to have the coin to commit, and the state companies don't seem to have the nerve or the will.

Another factor that put the lid on exporting was the relative performance of emerging markets compared to mature markets. For example, vehicle sales in Europe are stagnating, while markets like South America, Southeast Asia, Russia and China itself are rising beautifully.

But we should still expect them to show up in North America at some point. One analyst predicted the best Chinese automakers would be here in about five years, while the others will take 10 years or more.

BYD, which boasts Warren Buffett as one of its investors, announced it would like to have cars in the U.S. two years from now, but it has a history of missing targets.

Actually, Volvo looks poised to play a major role in the first foray of Chinese-made vehicles into Western markets. Volvo is in a unique position to use China as a manufacturing and export base, because it is owned by the Chinese automaker, Geely.

Volvo's first factory in China produces the S60 sedan for domestic Chinese consumption, but Volvo executives suggested it could also be exported to the United States in the near future. Volvo and Geely are also collaborating on a new compact modular architecture that they both will use in their respective new vehicles. Analysts predict that the Volvo co-engineered Geely could be the first Geely exported to Europe and North America.

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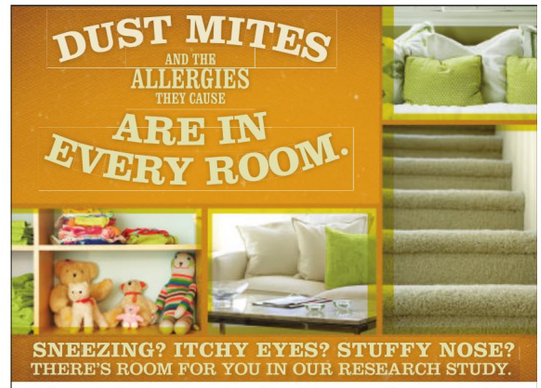

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You have a talent for surprising people and with the Sun linked to Uranus, planet of the unexpected, in your sign today you will go out of your way to shock. Just be careful you don't upset those on whom your security depends.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
What others tell you may seem reasonable but if something does not ring true, be cautious. Most likely you're wrong to be suspicions but today's cosmic set-up warns it's a bad idea to take chances.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Just because you do not get along with someone on a personal level does not mean you cannot work with them. Put your feelings to one side and make an all-out effort to get a joint project finished.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
If you need to make a decision concerning your career, wait until the end of the week. The planets warn if you make it today, you could end up moving in the wrong direction.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Someone will make a big deal of something that to you is of no significance. There's no point trying to reason because reason is an alien concept to them right now.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Try not to be so free with your cash today. Spending may not be a problem for you now but it will be later when there is something you want to buy and you cannot afford it.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may be tempted to ignore information that does not fit in with your worldview but that would be a mistake. Swallow your pride and act on what you are told. It may be embarrassing now but will save you trouble later on.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may be having second thoughts about something you recently agreed to but it's too late to change things. Even if you were able to do so it would cost you too much in terms of time, money and damaged reputation.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If you think you are being cheated, speak up. It may be that you have got the wrong end of the stick and there is nothing amiss, but until you know that for sure you cannot afford to take chances.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you let even one doubt enter your mind, it will grow alarmingly quickly and before you know it you will think the world is coming to an end.

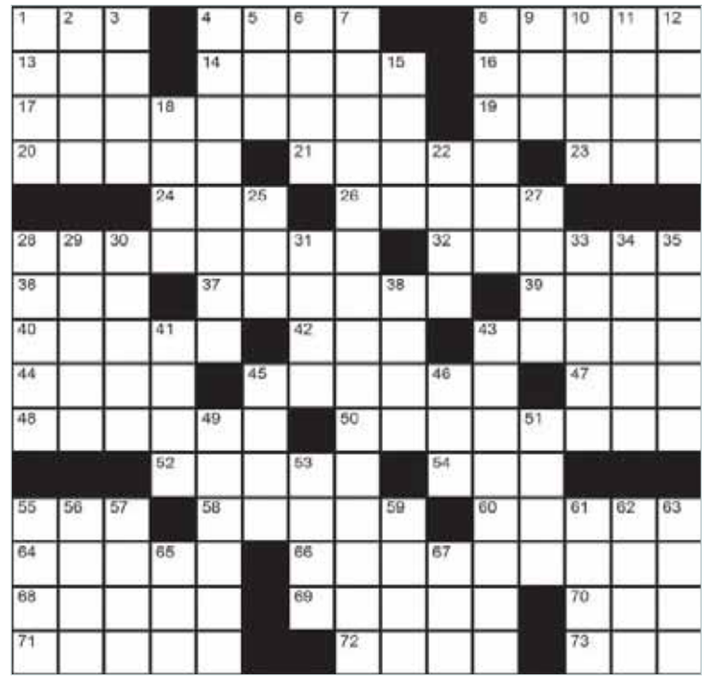
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Consider all options before deciding what you're going to do next. Better still, do nothing. Loved ones may be annoyed you are dragging your feet but what can they do about it?

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If you made a promise, keep it. If you try to wriggle out of it now you will damage your reputation, to the extent that certain people won't trust you so easily again. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

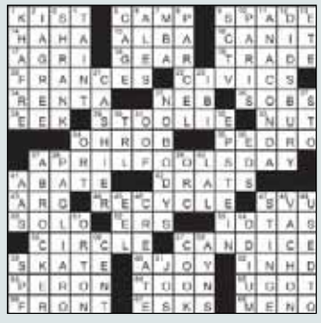
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Actor Stephen
4. __-a-brac
8. Manitoba's highest elevation, __ Mountain
13. __ Dara (Jazz musician father of rap star Nas)
14. Ms. Remini's
16. Daisy type
17. Quebec village since 1600, located at the St. Lawrence/Saguenay rivers
19. Freshen
20. Cream cheese flavour, __ & Onion
21. Card deck's Jack
23. Classified __
24. Suppositions
26. Stairway sound
28. It's protected in a National Park
32. Arm injury aids
36. Antacid brand
37. Skillful
39. Actress Ms. Petty
40. Lawyer's expertise
42. Newt variety
43. Additional
44. Bike part
45. Botch: 2 wds.
47. Freezer stuff
48. Humid
50. BC village; or, 'Lanes' to shop at in downtown Toronto
52. 1950s fashion, now
54. Mr. Gershwin
55. Camel hair garment
58. Broadway offerings
60. Stage, as of a cycling event, in France
64. __ Bay (Canadian body of water)
66. Licence plate motto: '__ British Columbia'
68. Unaccompanied
69. Accounting firm, __ & Young
70. Early hrs.
71. Early __ (Morning person)
72. Video game maker
73. Charlotte __

Down
1. Campus mil. program in The States
2. "In the Valley of __" (2007)
3. Posh car
4. Iris which is Quebec's provincial flower: 2 wds.
5. Home, briefly
6. "May _ __ a question?"
7. Typical weather forecast in April: 3 wds.
8. __ Shield (Biggest ecozone in Canada)
9. Big Joe Mufferaw's prop
10. Ms. Dunham
11. Tinted
12. Longbow woods
15. Incision mark
18. Roman love poet
22. Suit piece
25. Comedian Mr. Caesar
27. Tartan garb
28. Easts opposites
29. People of the Arctic
30. Longest river of France
31. Available
33. Pitcher's accomplishment, __-__ game
34. __-Roman (Wrestling)
35. Sea nymph
38. "__ _ blessing!"
41. Virtually
43. Gilbert & Sullivan output
45. Legendary story
46. Submachine gun type
49. Canadian folk musician, Don __ (b.1909 - d.1973)
51. Sixth/seventh notes, variantly
53. Boxer's pre-bout garb
55. Slightly open
56. Island of Indonesia
57. Old Testament: Book of __
59. Reasoned
61. From way out
62. Athletic footwear brand
63. Besides that
65. Hydrocarbon suffix
67. 18th President ...his monogram

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

				4		1		
1	6						8	
	4	2	7			6		
		4	9			2	3	
			1		5			
	2	1			8	7		
		9			4	8	7	
	3						4	5
		5		7				

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	4	7	3	6	9	5	1	8
6	9	8	2	5	1	7	3	4
3	5	1	7	8	4	9	6	2
9	1	2	5	7	8	6	4	3
8	6	5	4	9	3	1	2	7
7	3	4	6	1	2	8	9	5
1	7	3	9	2	5	4	8	6
5	2	9	8	4	6	3	7	1
4	8	6	1	3	7	2	5	9

Today
8°/-1°
Mainly sunny

Thursday
5°/2°
Partly sunny

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